

First Sunday of Advent
December 1, 2024 10a.m.

Voluntary “The hills are bare at Bethlehem” Emma Lou Diemer
“All earth is waiting” David Cherwien

Hymn 57 “Lo! He comes, with clouds descending” *Helmsley*

Song of Praise Stanza 1 *(page 1 of booklet)*

Opening Acclamation *(page 1 of booklet)*

Collect Almighty God, give us grace to cast away the works of darkness, and put on the armor of light, now in the time of this mortal life in which your Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge both the living and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

First Lesson Jeremiah 33:14-16

The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will fulfill the promise I made to the house of Israel and the house of Judah. In those days and at that time I will cause a righteous Branch to spring up for David; and he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. In those days Judah will be saved and Jerusalem will live in safety. And this is the name by which it will be called: "The Lord is our righteousness."

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's People

Thanks be to God.

Psalms 25: 1-9 *(please read responsively)* *Ad te, Domine, Ievani*

1 To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul;
my God, I put my trust in you; *
let me not be humiliated,
nor let my enemies triumph over me.

2 Let none who look to you be put to shame; *
let the treacherous be disappointed in their schemes.

3 Show me your ways, O Lord, *
and teach me your paths

4 Lead me in your truth and teach me, *
for you are the God of my salvation;
in you have I trusted all the day long.

If you are new to St. Stephen's, you will find helpful information on the back of this leaflet.

- 5 Remember, O Lord, your compassion and love, *
for they are from everlasting.
- 6 Remember not the sins of my youth and my transgressions; *
**remember me according to your love
and for the sake of your goodness, O Lord.**
- 7 Gracious and upright is the Lord; *
therefore he teaches sinners in his way.
- 8 He guides the humble in doing right *
and teaches his way to the lowly.
- 9 All the paths of the Lord are love and faithfulness *
to those who keep his covenant and his testimonies.

The Gospel Luke 21: 25-36

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke
Glory to you, Lord Christ

Jesus said, "There will be signs in the sun, the moon, and the stars, and on the earth distress among nations confused by the roaring of the sea and the waves. People will faint from fear and foreboding of what is coming upon the world, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. Then they will see 'the Son of Man coming in a cloud' with power and great glory. Now when these things begin to take place, stand up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near."

Then he told them a parable: "Look at the fig tree and all the trees; as soon as they sprout leaves you can see for yourselves and know that summer is already near. So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that the kingdom of God is near. Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all things have taken place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

"Be on guard so that your hearts are not weighed down with dissipation and drunkenness and the worries of this life, and that day catch you unexpectedly, like a trap. For it will come upon all who live on the face of the whole earth. Be alert at all times, praying that you may have the strength to escape all these things that will take place, and to stand before the Son of Man."

The Gospel of the Lord
Praise to you, Lord Christ

Sermon

The Rev. Dr. Nina R. Pooley

Affirmation of Faith

(page 2 booklet)

The Prayers of the People

Let us pray for our own needs and those of others, Especially:

Those on our prayer list: We pray for: Ken; Tommie; Keith; Marcus; Sokpba; Mike; Will; Judy; Marty: Ann; Marc; Sam; Pat; Becky; Susan; Dren; Jeff; James; Ted; The family of The Rev. Francie Hills; We pray for a just peace for Ukraine, and for those affected by the violence in Israel, Palestine and Lebanon. Please include your intercessions.

Those who have Died: *The Rev. Frances Hills*

Offertory Anthem: “Keep your lamps trimmed and burning”

Traditional Spiritual/Pasch

Wake! Awake! Keep your lamps trimmed!

Dark night will soon be gone.

Keep your lamps trimmed and burning for this work is almost done.

Children, don't grow weary, for this work is almost done.

Darker midnight lies before us, for this work is almost done.

Lo, the morning soon is breaking for this work is almost done.

Keep awake!

Philipp Nicolai

The Great Thanksgiving

(page 5, booklet)

Communion Anthem: “Dearest Lord Jesu”

J.S. Bach

Dearest Lord Jesu, oh why dost Thou tarry?

Come now for I am of waiting so weary.

Come now and comfort my heart in despair.

Take me from misery, sorrow and care.

Come now, Lord Jesus, oh why dost Thou tarry?

Come now for I am of waiting so weary, so weary.

Deck Thee, oh deck Thee, meet garment prepare Thee.

Keep thy lamp burning, and oil ever near Thee,

Ready, oh faithful one, fit for the Feast

At midnight call for thee, oh wedding guest.

Come now, Lord Jesus, oh why dost Thou tarry?

Come now for I am of waiting so weary, so weary.

Christoph Werner

Announcements

Hymn 73 The King shall come when morning dawns” *St. Stephen*

Voluntary “He came down” David Lasky

PARISH NOTICES

ST. STEPHEN’S TABLE - Gifts in thanksgiving or in memory can be made by sending a donation to the church with the name of the person to be honored or remembered. You can also make a donation online! Just go to our website, select “Give,” and “St. Stephen’s Table” from the Fund menu. *This week’s Gifts to the Table are given by Nancy Ambrosi in loving memory of her parents and brother.*

SUNDAY FUNDAY December 15, gather in the Sears Room at 9:45 a.m.

HOSTS NEEDED FOR COFFEE HOUR – Coffee Hour is: hospitality; welcoming the stranger; simple and fun! Contact Craig Reynolds for more information. cmreyn@gmail.com

ADVENT ADULT EDUCATION – Creating an Ethical Will: Sharing your life’s wisdom & leaving a spiritual legacy. Sunday: December 15 at 9 AM. Co-facilitators: Jim Brennan, Craig Reynolds, Rev. Nina

STEWARDSHIP STRAIGHT TALK - What is the Rector’s Discretionary Fund used for?

The discretionary fund supports immediate and urgent needs experienced by our parishioners, as well as our brothers and sisters in the broader community. With this ready fund at hand, we are able to prevent evictions, provide emergency shelter for those escaping abuse, help pay utility and car repair bills, to cite a few recent examples. It also enables St. Stephen’s to support the local food pantry and fuel fund.

Like St. Stephen’s Table, the Rector’s Discretionary Fund is supported by specific contributions on top of annual pledges. If you haven’t turned in your pledge card yet (there’s still time), you can designate any amount under “Additional Contributions.” If you have turned in your pledge card already (thank you!), you may donate to the Rector’s Discretionary Fund at any time throughout the year.

Pledges are never too late. You may drop your card in the offering basket or send it to the office.



GIVING TO ST. STEPHEN’S IS EASY- Scan the QR code to find our giving form. Or, text “giviststephens\$your amount” to 73256. (example: giviststephens\$25 will donate \$25.) Message and data rates may apply. Message frequency varies. Text HELP to 73256 for help. Text STOP to 73256 to cancel.

**POINSETTIA DEDICATIONS ARE BEING ACCEPTED UNTIL
DECEMBER 17** – Envelopes are available in the sanctuary.

MINISTERS OF THE CELEBRATION

CELEBRANT	The Rev. Dr. Nina R. Pooley
LECTORS	Suzanne White, Renee Kaley
LAY MINISTERS	Dan & Angie Moon
ALTAR GUILD	Marie Sutton (Chair) & Roy Sutton
GREETERS	Diane Forsyth, Paula Morey
VESTRY GREETER	David Nevin

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THIS WEEK'S SCHEDULE

Office Hours: Tuesday-Wednesday - 9:00 a.m.- 4:00 p.m.

Worship: Wednesday December 4, 6:30 p.m. Compline;
Sunday December 8, 10 a.m.

Knitting Group: Tuesday, December 3, 5:00-6:30 p.m., Guild Room

St. Stephen's Table: Thursday and Friday, Grab and Go 4:30 p.m.

Meetings: AA – Monday – Thursday at 12 noon, Friday at 6:30 p.m.;
Saturday at 10:00 a.m. NA - Tuesday & Wednesday 7:30 p.m., Saturday at
6:30 p.m. Dining Room

TABLE SETTINGS

An update on St. Stephen's Table

Menu Highlights from November

- Chicken Pot Pie
- Kielbasa, Mac and Cheese
- Meatball Sandwiches
- Thanksgiving dinner
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All meals are served with utensils, a sweet treat, a bottle of water
and a kind word

THIS WEEK'S PRAYER LIST

In our Parish prayers, *We pray for:* Ken E.; Tommie C; Keith C; Marcus B; Sokpha I; Mike E.; Will C.; Judy J.; Marty P; Ann M; Marc B; Sam; Pat; Becky; Susan C; Drew; Marc B; Jeff S; James; Ted K.; the family of Francie Hills; a just peace for Ukraine, and for those affected by the violence in Israel, Palestine and Lebanon

And those serving in the armed forces and their families: MAJ Andrew B., CPT Nichols P., CPT Curran J.D., Lance CPL Chad L., SPC Amanda D., Pvt. Corey F.D., Army Ranger Sean J., Micah H.

We pray for our community:

Habitat for Humanity in Pittsfield
Department of Mental Health
Government of the United States

In Our Diocesan cycle of prayer we pray for:

St. Luke's, Worcester;
Human to Human
Pittsfield Council of Churches

In our Anglican cycle of prayer we pray for:

Sunday: Province of the Episcopal Church of South Sudan
Monday: Diocese of Kitale (Kenya)
Tuesday: Diocese of Kiteto (Tanzania)
Wednesday: Diocese of Kitgum (Uganda)
Thursday: Diocese of Kitui (Kenya)
Friday: Diocese of Kivu (Eglise Anglicane du Rwanda)
Saturday: Diocese of North Kivu (Eglise Andlicane du Rwanda)

St. Stephen's Episcopal Church
67 East Street + Park Square
Pittsfield, MA 01201

413-448-8276
mail@ststephenspittsfield.org (e-mail)
ststephenspittsfieldnews@gmail.com (news items)
www.ststephenspittsfield.org



VESTRY

Josie Ellis, Co-Warden
Suzanne White, Treasurer
Christopher Perry, Clerk
David Nevin
James Alden

John Garinther Co-Warden
William O'Neil, Asst. Treasurer
Wendy W. Coakley
Chris Plankey
Caleb Harmon

Our Staff

The Rev. Dr. Nina R. Pooley, Rector
ninapooley@revnina.org

Sarah Morrison, Parish Administrator
smorrison@ststephenspittsfield.org

Bert Boos, Office Assistant
bboos@ststephensfield.org

Joy Mullen, Director of Music
jmullen@ststephenspittsfield.org

Dan Moon,
Director of St Stephen's Table
dmoon@pittsfield.net

Weekday Sextons Ecuadorian Women's Co-op
Sunday Sexton Roy Stillman

The Diocese of Western Massachusetts
The Rt. Rev Douglas Fisher
800-322-8513 www.diocesewma.org

Welcome to Worship at St. Stephen's

We are delighted to have you with us today as we worship together. St. Stephen's Episcopal Church is an inclusive parish welcoming all people - regardless of ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, or creed. God loves you, and so do we!

All Are Welcome to Receive from God's Table.

Each week we share the bread and the wine: the gifts of God, given for the people of God. We invite you to receive communion, but, if you'd rather receive a blessing, please come forward and indicate that by crossing your arms across your chest.

Receiving Communion:

The bread - When you come forward hold your hands out together, palm up. The clergy person will place a wafer in your hands, and say, "The body of Christ." Your response: "Amen." (Please let the clergy know if you'd prefer a gluten free wafer.)

The wine - is offered by chalice bearers on either side of the aisle in front of the altar area. Those sitting on the right should choose the right side chalice, those sitting on the left, choose the left side chalice. The chalice bearer will offer the wine, saying, "The Blood of Christ." Your response: "Amen." You may receive the wine by taking a small sip from the chalice, or by dipping your wafer in the wine, taking care not to touch the wine with your fingers. You may also choose to hear the words and respond without choosing to partake of the wine.

Children are always welcome at worship!!

Families are welcome to sit wherever they wish. There are child-friendly books in a bookshelf near a coloring station in the back, on the right side of the sanctuary. There's a second coloring station on the front left, where there is also our **Kids' Own Space activity area**. There's a Nursery Nook in the Guild Room for caregivers of infants and toddlers who need to take a break during worship. Caregivers, please come and go as your child needs to - for their safety, **we ask that children be accompanied at all times**. Sunday school is offered on the 2nd and 4th Sundays of each month, September through May.

Restrooms are located in our Parish House

Exit the sanctuary via the doors on either side of the altar and follow the signs.